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THE

Commonweal

China's Great Leap

The Total Organization of a Society

by Michael Harrington

Bigotry in California

Anti-Catholicism in the Election

by Lawrence T. King

TWO POETS . . . . . *by Vivian Mercier*
SECOND CHANCE . . . . . *by William Pfaff*
RUTHLESS SELECTION . . . . . *by Robert Gutwillig*
APPEAL OF THE PAST . . . . . *by John Cournos*

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Press Month, II

This February 13th issue of The Commonweal serves as a good means of demonstrating the benefits you will obtain from a Catholic Press Month trial subscription. The questions discussed in the issue illustrate the variety of interests of this lay-edited journal of opinion.

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

POLICING ATOM TESTS

THE DESIRE for disarmament is clearly universal. It stems directly from the fear of war, especially of an all-out global war with thermonuclear weapons. The current testimony of missiles experts that the Soviet Union could launch an I.C.B.M. from five thousands miles away and fifteen minutes later obliterate an appointed American target gives some idea of the nature of the prospect. Can no other means of security be found except that afforded by the balance of terror? The staggering cost of the latest weapons and of more proficient means of delivering them adds to the demand for disarmament. In many countries, including our own, arms expenditure requirements stand in the way of constructive programs that are urgently needed.

One of the primary hopes in entering upon official talks with the Soviet Union on the banning of further nuclear testing was that an agreement on this subject could be a first step toward general disarmament. The Soviets had already proclaimed that they were suspending such tests last March. Their scientists had agreed with ours last August that effective policing of thermonuclear testing was feasible. And as a token of our own good faith we suspended our own tests for a year on October 31 with a further pledge to refrain as long as there seemed to be a real chance of reaching an agreement. Even after the Russians were detected as having set off at least two thermonuclear explosions in the Arctic, despite their March proclamation, we refrained from further tests.

The parley on policing in which representatives of Britain, Soviet Russia and the United States have been engaged for the past three months has revealed wide divergencies. The U.S.S.R., as on other occasions, has stubbornly maintained that the presence of foreign observers on Russian soil would constitute a menace to the security of the state. It insists that the contemplated observation posts in the Soviet Union be manned by Russian nationals. This has proved to be an immovable obstacle.

ACCORDING to the proposals supported by the American and British delegates at Geneva, the Western atomic powers and the Soviet Union would have comparable contingents of observers within each other's borders. Each policing-of-tests observation post in the U.S.S.R., for example, would be headed by a Briton or an American, with half the station personnel Anglo-American. In the posts in America and Britain a Russian would be in command with his contingent fifty per cent Russian. For the test-policing stations established in other countries the personnel would be one-third Russian, one-third Anglo-American and one-third from other nations. The best the Russian delegate at Geneva has done to approach this offer is to suggest that several foreign observers might be permitted at the Russian-garrisoned policing stations in the Soviet Union to serve as a check on what was being done.

Another painfully familiar source of contention is the Soviet demand for veto power in any system which might be set up. If, for instance, others wished to dispatch an inspection team to the scene of a reported atomic explosion, the Soviet Union would want the right to block such a mission.

The Atomic Energy Commission in Washington is advocating a differentiation between atmospheric tests, which produce fall-out, and explosions underground. The first, which incur disfavor in world opinion, could be policed by planes over American, British and Russian territory (piloted and manned by neutrals, it might be suggested). For underground tests wholly effective methods of detection

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have still to be worked out. And at Geneva the Russian delegate gave some grudging acquiescence to an American request that carefully controlled underground tests, announced well in advance and securing approval, be permitted in the interests of utilizing thermonuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The latest arms control stalemate at Geneva is not absolute.

The Soviet Union has its own reasons for arriving at some measure of agreement with the Western atomic powers. It is not only a case of self-preservation. The heightening of the arms race makes for dissatisfaction at home and fear of the Soviets abroad. It makes the "building of socialism" within the U.S.S.R. and its spread to other lands considerably more difficult. Unreasonableness at the parley on the policing of tests therefore has its limits.

In order to bargain effectively with the Soviet Union on policing atomic tests and other vital issues, the United States still has to lead from strength. We can neglect neither our defenses, nor the strength and amity of our allies, nor the good opinion of the peoples of the free world. But we have to go beyond that. Somehow or other we have to generate a new sense of national determination that will also confront the world challenge of the Communist system in educational, economic and political terms.

AS VIRGINIA GOES?

IN THE RESISTANCE to integration, the proud state of Virginia furnished the rest of the like-minded South with legal, political and tactical leadership. It was in the "Old Dominion" that the doctrine of "massive resistance" was formulated as both rallying-cry and strategy in the Southern struggle to evade the Supreme Court directive of 1954. It was the "massive resistance" plan, followed in Arkansas by Governor Orval E. Faubus, which led to the closing of the Little Rock schools.

Now, in a series of Federal and State court decisions, Virginia's "massive resistance" laws have been found to violate both the Virginia and United States Constitutions. Virginia's Governor J. Lindsay Almond, Jr., and the state legislature, previously sworn never to surrender in the fight against integration, have both declared that the battle is over. Governor Almond has said that there is nothing further to be done to prevent integration. His recommendations to the legislature—quickly approved—call merely for repeal of the state's compulsory attendance law and tuition grants to parents who may wish to educate their children privately, rather than in integrated public schools.

Furthermore, the Governor has called upon Virginians to keep law and order, "that the good name and honor of Virginia be not defamed," as integration, already begun, proceeds in the reopened schools. Police and school authorities are pledged to make every effort to preserve the peace and prevent the kind of outburst which proved so costly in Little Rock. It may be, of course, that violence will flare—it takes only one fanatic to strike a blow or hurl a stone—but there are considerable grounds for optimism. Not least among these grounds is the fact that leaders of the student bodies in Norfolk high schools have publicly urged their fellow students to do all they can to make the integration of their schools peaceful and orderly.

If the integration of these Virginia schools—limited as it is—can be carried on successfully, it is not unreasonable to hope that the cause of the moderates will be significantly advanced throughout the South. Successful integration in any community is a reassurance and example to all the other communities of the South, but acceptance of the principle of integration by the state of Virginia—and efforts in good faith to implement that principle—will carry a special weight.

Let it be hoped that what is happening in Virginia will prove to be the turning-point in this entire tragic affair. Once it is acknowledged in the South that the law of the land must be met, then the real work can begin. This real work—which is not to be minimized—is to accomplish the integration of the schools with a minimum of suffering to everyone concerned, children and adults, Negroes and whites. The extremists and the irresponsibles must be made to see that history has passed them by, and then the men of good will, North and South, can join in the positive work which is demanded of us all. We cannot pretend that the task before the South, before America, is not painful and enormous, but we are convinced that it will yield before intelligence, effort and love.

MR. KHRUSHCHEV'S CONGRESS

ONE CAN note some of the important changes that have taken place within the Communist world within the last few years by contrasting Mr. Nikita Khrushchev's speech to the Twenty-first Party Congress with that which he delivered to the Twentieth Congress three years ago.

At that time Mr. Khrushchev, one of several

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important speakers, gave the celebrated, secret speech which denounced Stalin in bitter terms. That he could give such a speech was undoubtedly a sign of his strong position in the Communist hierarchy, but it was a position which he had to struggle to maintain. For soon after that, much of Eastern Europe became rebellious and Hungary was brutally assaulted before it was subdued. In the summer of 1957 Mr. Khrushchev fought for at least his political life, and his success was marked by the demotion and denunciation of the "anti-party" faction. Later, China, Russia's biggest partner in Communism, was rumored to be asserting itself against Russian desires.

Last week, however, Mr. Khrushchev appeared to have things in hand, or at least in check. For more than six hours he spoke to over a thousand of Communism's leaders around the world. He outlined the new seven-year plan which is intended to increase industrial output by eighty per cent, to raise real wages and to provide more consumer goods. Russia will in time, he asserted, "catch up with America" economically as it has already surpassed it in military terms. Mr. Khrushchev avowed continuing friendship and cooperation with China, and continued aid to President Nasser *if* he heeded sensible advice.

The Twenty-first Congress was clearly Mr. Khrushchev's. He has made himself the most notable Communist leader. The plans he has put forth are formidable. Although it remains to be seen how well they will develop, and how long Mr. Khrushchev can continue his domination, he has issued a strong challenge to the Western world.

OLD GUARD AND THE PRESIDENT

EVER SINCE the Democratic sweep in last fall's election, the Republicans have been indulging in public and private post-mortems. In recent weeks, these ventures into self-criticism have been particularly notable because of the outspoken criticisms of President Eisenhower voiced by conservative G.O.P. leaders.

When the Republican National Committee met recently in Des Moines, Mr. Eisenhower warned that the G.O.P. must not become a "hibernating elephant" that wakes only at election time. "Political activity must be a matter of unremitting effort," Mr. Eisenhower said. "It must go on three hundred and sixty-five days a year."

Normally, President Eisenhower's statement would have been taken as a standard exhortation by the Party's leader to the political faithful. This time, however, a good many of the Republican workers present were clearly not in the mood for Presidential pep-talks. Representative Richard Simpson of Pennsylvania, head of the G.O.P. Congressional campaign committee, was applauded vigorously when he responded to the President's message by stating bluntly that there has not been enough support for the Party from President Eisenhower himself. "I call upon the White House," he said, "to give us some of that unremitting political, planned effort on behalf of the Republican Party. . . . I am sick and tired of going around the country and having good, honest Republicans coming up to me and saying, 'For what does the Party stand?' "

A message from Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona, newly elected as chairman of the Republican Senatorial campaign committee over the opposition of Eisenhower Republicans, was just as critical of the President. The G.O.P., Senator Goldwater charged, is in trouble because it has failed to preach conservative Republican principles. Picking up the President's reference to a hibernating elephant, Senator Goldwater said: "The elephant will come out of hibernation when he knows in what direction it will point its trunk. . . . Let the Party quit copying the New Deal. . . . The Party has lost votes because of our failure to be a party of principle."

It is obvious that the G.O.P. is in trouble, and that this trouble goes back much further than last November. In a period of rising population, the Democrats are winning adherents, especially among younger voters; polls and Congressional elections have indicated time after time that the Republicans are failing to gain strength. Under these circumstances, self-criticism is certainly called for. Nonetheless, there are several ironic notes about the criticisms being leveled at Mr. Eisenhower by conservative Republicans.

President Eisenhower, it is generally conceded, has not always visualized his role as Party leader as a very active one. When he was elected in 1952, there was great hope that he would reorientate the G.O.P. in the direction of the "modern Republicanism" with which he was identified. This he has not done to any large extent, and recently he even expressed regret that he had ever used the expression. But it has always been the Eisenhower Republicans who wanted the President to play a more active part in the Party—precisely because they are convinced that the Party's troubles come from the public identification of the G.O.P. with men like Senator Goldwater and similar right-wing critics of the President.

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Old Guard Republicans may enjoy criticizing the President, but Mr. Eisenhower seems to have the voters on his side of the argument. Last fall, for example, conservative G.O.P. candidates for the House and Senate went down to defeat all over the country, with Senator Goldwater an outstanding exception, while in most of the races in which the G.O.P. came out ahead, Eisenhower Republicans did the winning. Similarly, the November election produced a promising G.O.P. Presidential possibility in New York, but the Party's victory there was won, not by an Old Guard Republican, but by Nelson Rockefeller, a man identified with the Eisenhower wing of the G.O.P.

In view of all this, it is hard to take the views of Senator Goldwater and other right-wing critics of President Eisenhower very seriously. The Republican Party may need a great deal of renovation and repair, in which Mr. Eisenhower should play an important role, but the President's Republican foes are looking for the termites in the wrong wing of the Party.

FOREIGN POLICY AND THE SENATE

NO SOONER had Theodore Francis Green announced that he was resigning as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee than there was eager and contradictory speculation about what the change would mean. Senator Green, who is now ninety-one, will retain other posts, but he said that failing eyesight and hearing made it desirable that he relinquish some of his present responsibilities. The committee, of which he will remain a member, will now be headed by Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas.

One of the first items of speculation concerned the relation, if any, between Senator Green's resignation and the replacement of former Republican House Leader Martin. The seniority rules of Congress have been frequently criticized because they are so designed that many of the most important chairmanships are awarded to men who, in other positions, would have been involuntarily retired because of age. The younger and, it is asserted, more energetic Congressmen must remain too long under wraps. According to this view, much of the vigorous leadership that our country needs is now being wasted.

While speculation concerning possible changes in the seniority rules is interesting, and such changes would be important, of more immediate significance is the change which has been wrought on the committee itself. For Senator Fulbright, one of the most able and informed of Senators, has long been critical of Mr. Dulles, the State Department, and the conduct of United States foreign policy. As chairman of the very important Foreign Relations Committee his opinions will be more widely heard and his criticism will cut more deeply. There are grounds, therefore, for hoping that our foreign policy will be subject to reconsideration, that the United States will not merely react to proposals from Russia but that it will develop original, positive programs in dealing with a world threatened by Communism.

Such optimism, however, must be tempered by some hard facts of political life that should be clear by now to all who watched the Congressional debates on Rule XXII. The Majority Leader of the Senate, Lyndon Johnson, has firm opinions about the role of Senate Committees—and he has a way of making his opinions felt. The Foreign Relations Committee, for instance, is entitled to know foreign policy problems and to be kept up to date on developing decisions, to make studies and to offer suggestions. But final authority for policy-making rests in the Executive office. Senator Johnson is not one to see these boundaries breached, or even blurred. Further, his bipartisan approach to foreign policy will minimize many of the strong differences which exist between the State Department and Congressional critics. Not until there is a change in the Executive branch will Senator Fulbright's views be not only heard but, possibly, implemented.

"BY POPULAR DEMAND"

FOR THOSE READERS who do not follow the world of television with our own rapt fascination, we pass on the following piece of information. The Ed Sullivan show recently included a take-off on that well-known Oriental detective, Charlie Chan. As far as the skit's merits go, we can only report that in our house even the kids didn't think it was very funny. What interested us, however, was learning later in the week that although the skit was done "live" on Sunday, it had already been kinescoped the day before so it could be presented again "by popular demand" next July. You follow? On Sunday the skit was done "live," but on the day before it was done for kinescope so that next July—well, you get the idea. This development obviously has infinite possibilities in many fields, but we are afraid even to think about them.

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China's Great Leap

The totalitarian agony of the Chinese people could result in a widespread food shortage, even starvation, at the very moment when it succeeds

by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

COMMUNIST CHINA was the center of an enormous amount of attention during 1958. There was a din of announcements proclaiming the surpassing of quotas, the production of pig iron in back yards, the communization of the entire peasantry, with the credible and the incredible reported in the same staccato tone. And yet, with all the claims and all the articles, there is hardly a political subject in the world which is more obscure than China is today. This fact was made painfully clear last December, when the Chinese Communists declared a slow-down in their "great leap forward." After the announcement, commentators and theorists rushed onto the air and into print with sharply conflicting interpretations which served only to emphasize the general lack of solid information.

Indeed, at times the whole affair took on the mood of a Yellow Peril panic. Yet there is a very real dilemma here. On the one hand, China is a totalitarian state with carefully rationed and restricted information. That means that it is extremely difficult to come up with verified figures which can become the basis of an analysis of trends and tendencies. On the other hand, the events of the "great leap forward" are so obviously crucial for the future, not simply of China but of the whole world, that they demand assessment and evaluation, even if tentatively. There is, of course, no easy way out of this dilemma, but a statement of it, at least, is an essential preamble to an article like this one.

The first reference to the "great leap" occurred in February of 1958. At that point, the campaign to turn every backyard and alley in China into a center for steel production had not begun; neither had the drive to herd nearly five hundred million human beings into the communes. This initial reference was an article in the *People's Daily* of Peking on February 12th, announcing that the Fifth Session of the Chinese Communist Party Congress had declared itself in favor of a forced march, a gigantic effort to surpass all previous production records. About the same time, the campaign in favor of birth control (which had itself begun as a reversal of policy) was soft-pedaled. Under the conditions of the "great leap," China needed human energy and there was to be no such thing as surplus population.

IN APRIL, the first of the now famous communes was established in Honan Province, and named "Sputnik." Yet there was no general fanfare, no indication that the commune system was soon to be exalted as one of the greatest advances of the century. At this time, the emphasis was on more conventional means of spurring production. And shortly after "Sputnik" was founded, the move which was to climax in the Quemoy crisis occupied the center of attention. On May 5, there was the denunciation of Titoist "revisionism," followed by a growing campaign around Mao's slogan that "American imperialism is a paper tiger"—the incredible Communist theory that China could be victorious in a nuclear world war.

The denunciation of Tito and the new belligerence with regard to the offshore islands culminated in Khrushchev's visit to Peking at the end of July. In retrospect, it appears that the Chinese Communists regarded this as closing one phase of their program, for it was in August that the drive for the communes began in earnest. On August 6, a gigantic movement for the collection of scrap metal was mounted; on August 11, Mao visited "Sputnik" commune; and on August 29, the Central Committee of the Party declared for a superhuman effort to bring the entire Chinese peasantry under the rule of the commune system.

Nevertheless, it would be quite wrong to think that

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there was an ascending and unbroken movement from the August decision on the communes to the mid-December shift in emphasis. Almost as soon as the new program was initiated there were signs that it was in trouble. As far back as September, there were reports that the Communist cadres had been ordered to slow down, that the campaign might take five years to complete. Then, on October 22, the Central Committee announced that there were severe food shortages and ordered the establishment of "shock purchase teams" to gather up the harvest for the state. Around the same time, Peking radio and the *People's Daily* admitted that the pig iron being produced by the "voluntary" teams was, in large measure, unsuited for steel-making by conventional methods. During November and December the regime allowed further difficulties to become public, demanding that every commune worker get seven or eight hours sleep, and halting the closing of restaurants.

In early December, however, the Chinese Communists were still following the line established in August. The first industrial commune was set up around a mining complex in Shansi province, and the announcement was made that this was a model of the future life of the city masses. Then, on December 18, the Party issued the now famous slow-down directive. The urban communes were postponed; a shake-up was promised in the twenty-six thousand rural communes already in existence; a policy of wage incentives was proposed; and various reforms to allow more of a family life in the communes were instituted. This was followed by the statement on December 30 that a million urban officials and workers who had been sent to the countryside would now be returned to the city—and by the admission that food rationing had started in Peking.

SUCH A CHRONOLOGY should make several things quite clear. First of all, it is doubtful whether the Chinese Communists were working from a grand plan. The events as they unfolded have every mark of haste and improvisation. Secondly, the December slow-down was not a sudden move, but the climactic recognition of difficulties which had been accumulating from the first day of the new program. All in all, this fantastic record of suffering and reversal should make us hesitate before making any final conclusions.

In the general history of the year of the leap, the commune is, of course, only one element. But in the imagination of the entire world, this is the institution which has come to symbolize the entire momentous process of change which is shaking China. For the proposals made by the Chinese Communists between August and December go far beyond anything the world has ever known: it is as if they had read *1984* and decided that the society described there was good. But precisely because the commune program is so extravagant in its totalitarianism, it is doomed, and particularly in the Chinese context.

The fundamental principle of the commune is total state control over the rural population. This principle extends to eating, sleeping, sexual activity, the education of children, leisure time, to every aspect of life. The *Peking Review,* an organ of the regime, quotes the motto of the Hshushui commune: "Organize along military lines, work as if fighting a battle and live in a collective way!" This has meant barracks existence, with men and women separated, common dining rooms, and a calculated allowance of time in which mothers may see their children.

Indeed, one of the most radical aspects of the communes as they developed in the first period was an all-out attack on the family. Placing children in communal nurseries, or sending the older ones away to state schools became compulsory; husbands and wives were physically separated; wages were paid on an individual rather than on a family basis, and so on. It was during this time that the *People's Daily* proudly published a letter from a wife to a husband. She scolded her spouse for complaining that she was away all day and had wrecked their home. The family, she went on to explain, is a thing of the past: "The new kind of big family is different from the type we had in the past. It is a new type of revolutionary big family—a unit, an organization, an area, a street, a village or a county. All of the new China or the entire socialist camp is a much larger revolutionary big family."

Behind all of these collectivist measures, the fundamental motive was always the same: state control of every aspect of life. The communal dining room made it possible for the administration to ration more effectively (in those cases where serious food problems did not arise because of bureaucratic misplanning); the "liberation" of the woman from the home meant that she could be pressed into work crews; the "Communist" payment of money wages meant that the old possibility of getting a little bit of a surplus in the collectives was ended. But these are details, and an even more grandiose plan was announced.

A September article in *Peking Review* predicted that the Sputnik Commune in Honan "will set up mines; iron and steel plants; factories to produce ball bearings, tools and chemical fertilizers; workshops to repair machines and process farm produce; hydro-electric power projects, etc." This was in the mood of statements which saw the extension of the communal system to the urban areas and to industry. Such a conception is indeed grandiose and, under present conditions of Chinese society, impossible of realization. That, perhaps, is the most striking thing about the commune propaganda: retreat was inevitable.

Khrushchev's famous remark to Senator Humphrey —that the commune system was "old fashioned and

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reactionary"—is thus quite believable: the Russian tyrant could see through the extravagant claims of the Chinese tyrant. We might say, ironically, that we should be as cautious as Khrushchev in evaluating the claims of Chinese Communism. This agony of six hundred and fifty million people must be put into a true perspective.

THE GREATEST single problem facing China is that of population—or rather, this is the most dramatic focus of the enormous difficulties. If this fact is placed in the context of a nation which began its march to Communism with per capita production at a level of *one quarter of Russia's in 1917,* it is possible to put the proper qualifications around Mao's claims.

Fifteen years from now, when Mao predicts that China will "overtake" Britain in the production of major industrial commodities, China will have two hundred forty million more people. This *addition* is five times the present population of Britain. In other words, if we asume that the most ambitious and cherished plans work out, the surpassing of Britain in total production will place China at a level of one twentieth of British per capita production. In less dry and statistical terms, the totalitarian agony of the Chinese people, and particularly the emphasis upon capital goods, could result in a widespread food shortage, and even starvation, at the very moment when it succeeds!

In this context, *Red Flag,* the official theoretical organ of the regime, stated the following suicidal proposition during October: "the larger the population, the more it is possible to achieve greater, faster, better, and more economical results in building socialism." This was part of the general reversal of line on birth control which took place during the year of the great leap. In analytic terms, it demonstrates an incredible insensitivity to human misery. For at the end of this year, the greatest harvest in the history of China, the regime itself was admitting that it was rationing food in the capital city. What then will happen fifteen years from now, with the population growing at the rate of fifteen million a year?

This, however, is not to dismiss the Chinese Communist claims of advance as mere propaganda. There has been great growth—but of a certain kind. Unquestionably, plants are being built, steel capacity increased

and so on. But at the same time, the other departments of production—food and clothing for the people, housing and the like—are being held down, or even depressed. Take but one instance of the type of development which China is undergoing. Here is a nation which is woefully poor, with a low ration of clothes, food, medicine (there are less than a hundred thousand doctors among these six hundred and fifty million people). Yet the regime exports various items to Southeast Asian countries at one third of the price they bring in China itself. This, of course, is politically motivated, but more than that, it is an indication of the values which lie behind Peking's statistics.

The effort which the Chinese Communists are imposing upon the people to carry out these policies is literally prodigious. The standard urban working day is twelve hours long (six days a week). Add to this the campaign for "voluntary" increases of six sixteen-hour days and three twenty-four-hour days and then the various directives in favor of a minimal sleeping time of seven or eight hours make sense. The Titoists have been carrying out a devastating attack on the Chinese Communists in this regard simply by printing the official claims of the regime. Thus, the Belgrade *Politika* quoted a newspaper article in which an enthusiastic worker told of how "the Communist Party secretary is compelled to visit us every evening at ten to persuade us to go to sleep" (the shift had begun at six in the morning). This is the kind of forced march which the regime has decreed, the ant-hill character of Chinese totalitarianism.

Perhaps the greatest danger in all of this is probably in the field of foreign policy. For the Chinese Communists face the problems of desperation. They need external enemies as a means of internal control (thus the relation between the Quemoy campaign and the "great leap")—and they fear a nuclear holocaust less than any nation in the world, for the one thing which China has a surplus of is casualties. Not too long ago Mao put it this way: "But in the end the bomb will not destroy the people, the people will destroy the bomb." The reasoning behind his pronouncement, and similar statements in the Chinese press, is that the Chinese can absorb many more deaths than any other country in the world and still "survive."

In the year of the "great leap," then, China continued on the path which its Communist minority has chosen for it: totalitarian industrialization. This inevitably meant an increase in controls over the people, the introduction of a total state control more absolute than anything the world has ever known. China moves forward, yet at a terrible price and with terrible unevenness, toward a future which is desperate even if the most optimistic predictions come true, toward a future with which the West, one way or another, will have to come to terms.

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The last election was marred by a campaign of crude anti-Catholicism

Bigotry in California

by LAWRENCE T. KING

THE RECENT balloting in California brought an outpouring of voters unprecedented in the state for a non-presidential election. In addition to choosing state and national leaders, Californians were confronted with a host of constitutional amendments. Two of these attracted nationwide attention and were credited with bringing out the record vote: Proposition 18, the so-called "right-to-work" amendment, and Proposition 16, a proposal to impose mandatory property taxes on all private and parochial non-profit elementary and high schools.

Proponents of the latter spent more than a half-million dollars to promote the proposed amendment and waged a campaign of crude anti-Catholicism painfully reminiscent of the 1928 presidential campaign. Although the measure was defeated by a vote of more than two to one, it opened old wounds and left in its wake ugly scars which will take a long time to heal.

The vote on this issue was the second in six years; and despite the two defeats, Californians have no assurance that the people who were responsible for the measure will accept the verdict of the electorate and let the issue die a well-deserved death. A pamphlet issued by the measure's backers pledges, "We will fight it [the Catholic Church] in the courts! We will fight it in every state of the union! We will fight it in Congress! We will fight it in the press! We will fight it everywhere! We will fight to win!"

The tenaciousness of this group, which erupts periodically on the California scene under various names but always with the same leaders, is readily apparent. California was the last of the forty-eight states to grant tax exemption to all non-profit schools. In 1951, the state legislature voted exemption by a vote of 108 to 3, and the measure was signed into law by Governor Earl Warren. Immediately the private school foes activated an organization called the California Taxpayers' Alliance and succeeded in placing a constitutional amendment on the ballot to restrain the exemption. When they were defeated at the polls they took their case to the courts, this time as an organization called Constitution Advocates. But the California Supreme Court upheld the tax exemption. "The principle of separation of Church and State," the Court ruled, "is not impaired by granting tax exemptions to religious groups generally and it seems clear that the First Amendment was not intended to prohibit such exemptions. Under any circumstances, any benefit received by religious denominations is merely incidental to the achievement of a public purpose."

The decision was then appealed to the United States Supreme Court, which refused to review the case for want of substantial federal question. Last November's constitutional amendment proposition was the latest—and most ambitious— effort in the group's campaign. This time, the organization was called Californians for Public Schools, although it bore no connection with California's public schools and could not claim the support of a single organization of public school teachers or administrators in the state.

IN THE initial stages of the campaign, the anti-exemption organization pegged its promotion on the tax question, claiming that Californians were being taxed to subsidize private and parochial schools. This brought a statement from the office of the state controller, Robert Kirkwood, which pointed out that the state's 1,076 non-profit church-related schools educate 340,000 students annually at a saving to the state of almost $118,000,000. If these schools were put on property tax rolls, it was pointed out, the total revenue realized by local and state taxing authorities would not exceed $1,800,000. These figures were given wide publicity in the state's press, together with stories detailing the struggles of local school boards to keep pace with the state's burgeoning population.

Publicity of this sort made Californians suspect the motives of Californians for Public Schools, and once it was established that the group's measure was inimical to the best interests of both the taxpayers and the public school system, the question arose as to the real motive behind the organization. The answer was not long in coming.

The Californians for Public Schools had formed an alliance with several other organizations, including segments of P.O.A.U. (Protestants and Other Ameri-

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cans United for Separation of Church and State), which used its facilities to sponsor public meetings throughout the state; Minute Men for the Constitution, an extreme right-wing group; the "Nuance Press" of San Francisco and Superior Books of San Diego, whose main stock in trade is vitriolic anti-Catholic literature.

The state was flooded with leaflets and pamphlets under such titles as "Californians Should Not Pay Taxes for a Foreign Religious Dictator," "Religious Brain-Stuffing," "Protestants, Don't Be Misled: One Sect Has Biggest Stake in Tax Exemption," "The Catholic Church Teaches All Other Religions Are Counterfeit—Are You Paying Taxes To Have This Taught in Parochial Schools?" and more in this vein.

One widely circulated leaflet urged readers to fight "the Catholic menace—before it is too late": "The United States is the last stronghold of Freedom of Religion. Even England and the Scandinavian countries have established churches. But we are on the brink of passing under Catholic domination. Our under Secretary of State, Christian Herter is a Catholic [sic], one of John Foster Dulles' sons is a Jesuit priest, John McCone, recently installed head of the Atomic Energy Commission, with its invaluable secrets, and the Chaplains of the three armed services are all Catholics. John Kennedy is the most prominently mentioned Democratic candidate for the next president. Pat Brown, Attorney General of California and possibly next governor, is a Catholic. [He was elected governor by more than a million votes.] . . . Many earnest students believe there is no longer a problem of losing freedom to Catholicism, but of getting out from under the control already in effect."

To "authenticate" the material used in the leaflet, it was pointed out that it was taken from such "reliable sources" as Paul Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power,* books by Joseph McCabe, "former priest," and from books "by former nuns and priests who got away from the Church."

Another leaflet contained such statements as: "From the earliest moment of our lives the priest, preacher, rabbi or imam enters the picture and the repetition of religious doctrines and rituals starts. We are never free from some form of religious brain stuffing, almost day and night for the rest of our lives—and even the repetition of religious propaganda goes on over our dead bodies. . . . Intelligent men know that religion is an insanity of mankind, that it is the principal cause of all our evils, of war, poverty, crime and unhappiness. Yet because of the vast untaxed wealth of the churches, their infiltration into every walk of life and government and their control of the young, their strength in perpetuating this insanity spreads."

Material of this nature boomeranged. Californians for Public Schools had originally made a strong play for Protestant support for their "anti-Catholic crusade" and had sought to make the issue appear as one of Catholicism versus Protestantism. But the organization's blatantly secularistic and anti-religious bias repelled most Protestants. In fact, it led to the formation of an organization called Protestants United Against Taxing Schools, which enrolled the support of more than two thousand Protestant clergymen and played an important part in rallying public opinion against the measure.

Two other organizations were formed to oppose the amendment. Catholics formed an organization on a diocesan level and a nondenominational group, Citizens United Against Taxing Schools, served as a statewide coordinating committee for the Catholic and Protestant groups.

WITH THE battle lines drawn, there was a distinct possibility that the opponents of the tax measure would reply in kind to the opposition and thus increase the bitterness and tensions of the campaign. Opponents of Proposition 16, however, were fortunate in the high type of leadership their organizations attracted. Early in the campaign, these leaders agreed that the issue was one of simple justice and they agreed to avoid at all costs the temptation to draw lines between Catholics and non-Catholics, Christians and non-Christians, believers and non-believers.

Consequently, the campaign against Proposition 16 was based on these convictions: *The tax issue*—that the proposition sought to cripple the normal expansion and growth of privately supported schools, to force marginal schools to close, to force parents of low-income families to transfer their children to public schools, thus adding to the burden of the public school taxpayer as well as the private school patron. *Unfairness*—that parents sending their children to non-profit schools pay their full share of public school taxes and also pay the cost of educating their children at non-profit schools. To impose levies on these schools would amount to a punitive taxation to discourage parents from exercising their right to determine their children's education. *American tradition*—that none of the other forty-eight states taxes these schools. Tax-free education is an American tradition which has come to us from colonial times. *Justice*—that this was not a religious issue, not a political issue. Members of all faiths and the leadership of the Democratic and Republican parties had spoken out against Proposition 16. It was a matter of justice. *Discrimination*—that church-related colleges are not taxed. It is unfair and inconsistent to tax church-related grammar schools and high schools.

During the closing weeks of the campaign, proponents of the measure stepped up the tempo of their attacks on the Catholic Church. Radio and television spot announcements characterized the Pope as a "foreign religious dictator intent on destroying the Ameri-

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can public school system through his agents, the Catholic bishops and priests in the United States."

Vice President Nixon happened to be campaigning for Republican candidates in California at the time this line was being pushed vigorously. At a press conference he called it "bigotry at its worst" and publicly announced he was voting against Proposition 16 and urged "all fair-minded Californians to do likewise."

Nevertheless, a week before the election, President Eisenhower's name was worked into a radio spot announcement to give the impression that he favored the objectives of the private school foes. It brought a prompt retort from the White House that the use of the President's name in this way was "completely unauthorized."

One of the most scurrilous charges of the campaign was made against the Catholic pastor of the church in Marysville. He was publicily accused of "blackmailing" a car dealer into giving him a station wagon for the use of his parish—"an example of the growing power of the Catholic Church in American life." The charge was investigated and proved to be completely false, and a statement to that effect was published by the car dealer who had sold the station wagon to the priest. The incident was typical of the hit-and-run tactics of the proposition's backers.

CAMPAIGNING of this sort could hardly go unnoticed in the state's press. Many papers initially shied away from editorial comment on the issue, but before the campaign was over virtually every major paper in the state had come out against the proposition. This was one of the few bright spots of the campaign, for it forced many editors off the sidelines and induced them to give serious consideration to a subject seldom treated on the editorial pages of American newspapers: the religious and educational rights of citizens in a pluralistic society.

One editorial, written by Simon Casady of the twice-weekly El Cajon Valley news, was given wide publicity by Citizens United Against Taxing Schools. Entitled "Intolerance, Wearing A False Face," it said in part: "Several readers of this newspaper have taken vigorous issue with our recent stand against a proposal to tax private schools. We respect their right to disagree. And we have shown our respect by printing some of their arguments. But we do not respect the brand of logic they are using in an effort to support their arguments.

"First, and loudest, they argue that exemption of private schools from taxation violates the concept of complete separation of church and state. By not taxing private schools, they contend, the government actually is subsidizing private schools. This is a patent distortion of a simple and important concept. We yield to no one in our adherence of the principle that church and state must be kept separate. But this separation is a two-way street. If there is to be complete separation of church and state, as our critics say there must, then the state should pay no tribute to any religion, and no religion should be required to pay any tribute unto the state. If these vociferous advocates of separation believe what they say, let them raise their voices in favor of complete separation instead of working for a proposed constitutional amendment which would permit the state to stick its hands into the collection plate on Sunday morning. . . . No man who is both honest and unconfused can assert that complete separation of church and state is possible so long as either can demand tribute or subservience from the other. . . .

"The plain truth seems to be, and it sticks out ugly prominence, that much if not all the suppo this move to tax private and church schools stems a strong anti-Catholic faction in the state.

"We do not make this charge lightly. And it is not to be taken lightly. Religious intolerance, whatever its disguise, is no trivial matter. We have heard some of these tax-the-private-school partisans enlarge verbally on their written views and we have read literature they have proffered to support their views. Their talk and their literature reeks of anti-Catholic propaganda, the typical composite of half-truths, false assumptions, quotations out of context and plain misrepresentations so characteristic of bigotry.

"We hold no brief for or against the Catholic Church, or any other organized religion. We would oppose, wherever we saw it, any attempt by any religion or creed to weaken or infiltrate the fabric of government. But we also will oppose the suppression, oppression or harassment of any creed, no matter what, where its detractors seek by devious subterfuge, to accomplish what they cannot do openly. The campaign to tax private schools is a thinly disguised flank attack on religious freedom. When any of our freedoms is attacked, all the others are endangered."

The fact that Californians defeated the measure by a vote of two to one is a tribute to the good sense of the California electorate and helps strengthen the growing conviction that appeals to religious bigotry are losing their effectiveness in American political life. As an immediate result of the election, 643 Catholic, 390 Protestant and 43 Jewish and nondenominational schools educating 340,000 students were protected from punitive taxation, taxation that would have relegated them to a second-class status in American educational life.

The issue also had national implications. Proponents of private school taxation had solicited funds on a nationwide basis, claiming that a victory in California would be followed by campaigns in other states. Perhaps their resounding defeat will spare the citizens of other states the type of campaign that Californians were forced to endure.

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Almost everywhere, prisons and penal institutions are becoming much more human

New Look in Prisons

by J. L. BENVENISTI

SINCE THE WAR, penal institutions all over Western Europe have been changing radically. The transformation is, ironically, largely due to the war, for in nearly all European countries it left the penal machinery in such chaos that something had to be done.

In France and Belgium there was widespread physical destruction; in Britain the provision of new equipment already years overdue was further delayed; and on the continent difficulties were intensified by an enormous growth of the prison population, largely consisting of collaborators. In France, it is said, there were at one time no less than sixty thousand of these undergoing some form of penal detention, while everywhere, from causes which were certainly not unconnected with the social and psychological impact of the war, there was a startling increase in the criminality rate. The need for speedy action was thus obvious—as was the opportunity for a new approach to an old problem.

The old idea that punishment should be retributive, or should at any rate have a large element of retribution in it, dies hard, and in the popular mind it is not wholly dead even now. However, this idea has long disappeared from serious penal theory, and even before World War II most prison administrations had already adopted "training for freedom" as their guiding principle. In postwar Britain, as the result of the Criminal Justice Act of 1948, new prison rules were drawn up, prefaced by the declaration that "The purposes of training and treatment of convicted prisoners shall be to establish in them the will to lead a good and useful life and to fit them to do so." In this way for the first time the new principle was formally embodied in the law of the land.

With these new ideas in the air and, in some cases, actually formulated as legal principles, it was natural that the penal structure that began to emerge from the post-war confusion should bear their imprint. One of the results, though this really only touches the surface of the matter, is that almost everywhere prisons and penal institutions are becoming much more human places—one may even say much pleasanter places—than they used to be.

This is particularly noticeable in France. There prison life before the war was dreadful, more so than in any other civilized country. The silence rule was absolute, prisoners had to face the wall whenever they passed each other, and the practice of solitary confinement was continued long after most other countries had abandoned it. All this is changing rapidly.

Today in France, as in most other advanced countries, there are a number of "open" and "semi-open" prisons. What is more, even the new "full security" prisons are models of what such places ought to be, both in design—in regard to such things as size and equipment of cells, lighting, and the like—and in the treatment of the inmates. In Belgium, too, there have been similar interesting and hopeful improvements.

THE POINT, however, is that these reforms in Western Europe are not only humanitarian. Rather, they are the byproducts of a completely changed approach to the problem of crime.

With the disappearance of the element of retribution in imprisonment, there were still its allegedly deterrent and reformative ingredients. Yet statistics showed all too plainly that our prisons were neither deterring nor reforming, or at best were doing so on a quite inadequate scale. The truth was that in most cases we were sending men to prison simply because we did not know what else to do with them. A distressingly large part of our criminal justice was nothing but a declaration of social bankruptcy.

That is what we are trying to change. Very often, the roots of a man's crime lie in a faulty relationship between him and his fellows which may be due to circumstances, past or present, to a defect of personality, or, as is most often the case, to a combination of the two. By what are admittedly still hit-and-miss methods, we are now slowly endeavoring to deal with this fact, and we do so by attempting to build up new loyalties and new directions of self-identification.

In addition, there is the problem of the reintegration of the individual prisoner into the social fabric after his discharge from prison. This is a task which after-

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care workers have long been tackling, of course, but in the past it often proved unduly difficult because their own work and that of the prison were treated as two separate and almost unrelated forms of activity. This too is being changed, and the change has led to two new developments in the British prison system, which have attracted considerable newspaper publicity without being fully understood.

THE FIRST of these changes involves a system of leaves for certain prisoners. Men who are serving sentences of two years and over are permitted five days leave if they have a home to go to, the leave to be taken not more than six months and not less than six weeks before the end of the sentence. Here again the aim is not purely humanitarian nor is it simply a reward for meritorious conduct; the chief purpose is to "save" a marriage and so to prevent the rent in the social fabric from being larger than it need be. From observations of the histories of prisoners of war we know that a separation of more than eighteen months tends to cause husband and wife to "grow away from each other." The pictures they form of each other have less and less correspondence with reality, and the leave system is expressly designed to deal with this danger.

The second development is the new hostel system, which affects prisoners serving sentences of four years and over. When suitable, such prisoners are accommodated in special hostels built within the prison grounds and are allowed to go out to work for an employer in exactly the same way as any free citizen. The work is found for them by the Ministry of Labor, the prisoners receive trade union wages, and after the deduction of the cost of their keep, their earnings are saved for them against the day of their discharge. Prisoners sometimes accumulate the equivalent of several hundred dollars in this way.

Here again the object is to help prisoners adjust as easily and quickly as possible to the state of freedom, and particularly to counteract the phenomenon known as "gate fever," the panic many prisoners experience at the very thought of re-entering the world of free men after a long stay in prison. Abuses of these new privileges may be expected, of course, but they are astonishingly rare, and the system is rapidly being extended and developed.

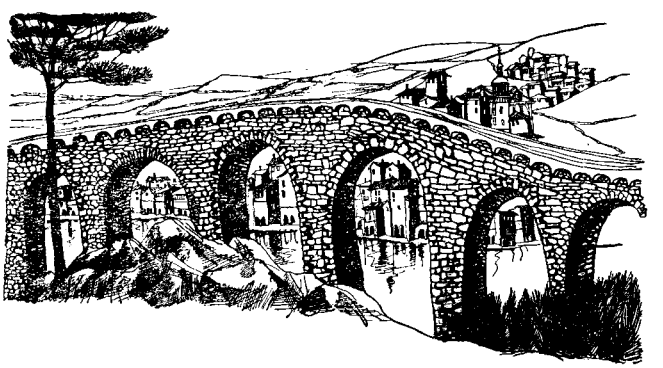
IN ANY PROGRAM of penal reform, the most important ingredient is the change in the function, quality and training of the prison staff. Here British progress seems quite remarkable, and there is promise of even better things to come.

Among the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act of 1948 is the abolition of the three-fold classification of prison sentences into simple imprisonment, imprisonment with hard labor and penal servitude. The more severe of these forms of punishment was reserved for certain specific offenses, but within that limitation the court had discretion as to which type of sentence it desired to impose. Thus it was able to determine not only the length of imprisonment but the nature of the treatment a convicted person would receive while serving a sentence. Today the only thing within the court's power to determine is the sentence's length. What happens to the prisoner while serving it is the exclusive concern of the prison service.

This change places a huge new responsibility on the prison service and tends to underline that it is a necessary agency not of retribution but of reform, and the Brienna Prison Service is rising to the occasion magnificently at a There is little that the psychologist and the social worker have to teach about personality formation, about identification by a thwarted personality with people who can become working models, about group consciousness, group behavior and group loyalties that the prison service does not now seek to inculcate both through its ever-extending series of courses and at its special training school run in conjunction with the University.

A transformation of this magnitude, which involves nothing less than the metamorphosis of the old "screw" into a kind of leader or counselor, naturally takes time and necessitates, among other things, the most rigorous selection among potential recruits, but already notable signs are in evidence of the progress being made. Until recently, for instance, it was usual to appoint people to the office of Governor and Assistant Governor from the outside, and normally ex-army officers were selected. Today the posts are being more and more filled from the ranks of the trained and specialized staff, and it is possible, even probable, that within a few short years the prison service, once reckoned as among the unloveliest and most brutalizing of occupations, may be accounted as one of the most worthwhile jobs a man can do.

Home leaves, the hostel system, new standards for prison staffs—these are revolutionary ideas in the long history of prisons. All that is now being done in prison reform is admittedly an experiment. We do not yet know the result. But surely if ever an experiment was worth making, it is this one.



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REFLECTIONS OF A CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE

HOW DOES it feel to be a controversial figure? I should know. Like everyone else connected with The Commonweal, I have been involved in one controversy or another for years. I take it that being so involved is not only the right but the duty of the journalist. Issues arise on which one has either to take a stand or be silent. Silence is sometimes golden, but the opinion-journalist who holds his tongue because he is afraid that what he has to say is not popular or currently acceptable has betrayed his calling.

The opinion-journalist is not vested with authority. It is his vocation not to settle issues once and for all but to see that they are understood, thought about, criticized and discussed. He does this by saying what he thinks, and telling why he thinks as he does. If he is an honest opinion-journalist, he will annoy some readers; in time he may indeed become a controversial figure, but I suppose that the greatest satisfaction he can know after a lifetime of such efforts is the realization he has never been considered quite respectable, wholly trustworthy, a company-man. The moment his opinions are safely predictable or his reputation is truly secure, he should begin to worry about himself. For it would seem that if he is all that acceptable, somewhere along the line he has sold out. An opinion-journalist should always have some group or other out to "get" him. If the authorities can rely firmly on his support at all times and the guardians of the safe and familiar can always count on his signature, something is wrong.

I am tempted to go so far as to say that an opinion-journalist who retires from the scene heavy with honors is a kind of fraud who has earned his living under false pretenses, for if he did his work honestly he would have gathered scallions as well as orchids. But to say that would be going too far. For there are authorities and conservative institutions that understand what opinion-journalism is all about and appreciate the role which continuing dialogue plays in keeping even the most stable institutions alive. They have been known to accept and even honor the opinion-ist for what he is.

Since I have been engaged in opinion-journalism for so long, and under a by-line, I am not really shocked—or even displeased—to learn that in some circles I am deemed controversial. Being controversial is sometimes a handicap but there are compensations, and one of them is knowing that one's calling is honorable and that from time to time one has the opportunity to say publicly what a lot of other people are saying privately. Having regular space in a magazine like this one, one recognizes an obligation to the people who would not otherwise be heard.

In a free society opinion-journalism is invaluable. It keeps the democratic dialogue going. We may not like the *Nation,* the *New Republic* or the *National Review,* but each of these publications in its own way speaks for thousands of people.

The point is not whether they are wrong or right, obscurantist or enlightened. The point is that there are people who feel the way these controversial magazines do; the whole society can benefit from learning what their opinions are. Several years ago, before the *National Review* came into existence, I urged that a magazine like it be founded. I did so not because I have any special sympathy with *NR's* "conservative" point of view but because I felt that a voice like its should be heard regularly.

A magazine like The Commonweal is even more easily misunderstood than the *National Review.* For despite its wholly unofficial character, The Commonweal is widely regarded as a Catholic publication. This undoubtedly upsets many of the magazine's Catholic critics, who would like to narrow the word Catholic to a formalistic, organizational definition that would reflect not only the broad wisdom of the Church but the narrower sociological and political prejudices of a particular group in the Church.

The Commonweal of course does not drape itself with the papal colors, nor has it ever claimed to be anything more than it is, a magazine of opinion edited by Catholic laymen. But that apparently is not enough. According to some of the review's critics, it must be either "official" or be put outside the bounds completely, with no claim whatsoever on the title Catholic. Who cares? The magazine is Catholic to the extent that it reflects the spirit of Catholicism and all the official designations in the world will not make it one whit more or less worthy of the designation.

It seems to me that the spirit of Catholicism is based on an openness of mind and of vision that militates against everything that is petty, sectarian, pietistic or tainted with puritanism. The Catholic, almost by definition, should be engaged unceasingly in relating the many aspects of current reality to the one overwhelming Reality that is the center of his faith. And it is here that there is room for healthy debate and vigorous disagreement among Catholics. Here is found the area of utmost freedom. It is here, too, that the ultimate argument against a party-line mentality is to be found. This is the frontier, the meeting of ancient principle with new fact. It is on this frontier, as I see it, that the opinion-journalist must take his stand, even at the cost of being a controversial figure, which is a cheap enough price to pay.

JOHN COGLEY.

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THE SCREEN

THE PITY OF IT ALL

IT IS UNFORTUNATE that Dore Schary's first independent production is "Lonelyhearts," a project doomed from the start. Nathanael West's *Miss Lonelyhearts,* published in 1933, is a very special kind of novel. Its style is both simple and surrealistic, and its story is a strange mixture of comedy and tragedy as it tells of a young newspaper columnist who takes himself and his broken-hearted correspondents very seriously.

The play, which Howard Teichmann fashioned from this elusive and soul-searching novel last year, closed after a short run; and the movie, for which Dore Schary himself wrote the script from both the play and the novel, also fails to capture West. Perhaps the assignment is too difficult; perhaps West's book cannot be transferred to another medium, especially one as realistic as cinema. How can a movie say that its hero saw the gray sky "as if it had been rubbed with a soiled eraser. It held no angels, flaming crosses, olive-bearing doves, wheels within wheels."

Mr. Schary deserves credit for trying, anyway. He did gather a magnificent cast for his ambitious production, but his director, Vincent J. Donehue, did not always use these actors to the best of their capabilities, nor do they look their best in the glaring light of this film's photography. The performances come through well, but the characters become types rather than real people.

As the very tortured writer of the lonelyhearts column, Montgomery Clift, a usually sensitive actor, writhes through reel after reel of suffering; while Robert Ryan, as his cynical boss, meanly goads him on, enjoying the young man's agony as he enjoys the suffering of his own wife (Myrna Loy) who is still paying for an adulterous misstep some ten years ago. Letting a little sweetness and light into this gloomy set-up is Dolores Hart as Clift's loyal and understanding girl friend; and, as an opposing symbol, there is Maureen Stapleton who does an excellent though brief portrait as one of Clift's correspondents. She plays the harridan whose complaints and lies about her crippled husband lead the writer into becoming an easy mark for seduction.

No doubt admirers of the original *Miss Lonelyhearts* will be annoyed at Schary's rewriting of West, especially with the changes made in Maureen Stapleton's vengeful husband and the cynical editor in order to give the story a conventional movie ending. Audiences approaching "Lonelyhearts" without any preconceived ideas will find it, however, an impressively grim film, with plenty of offbeat material that might serve as a severe warning against sending a boy to do a psychiatrist's job.

ALTHOUGH IT takes place in Hungary in November of 1956, "The Journey" is more concerned with romantic problems than with the fighting that was tearing the country apart. Scriptwriter George Tabori gives a nod to the determined Hungarians: "One always thought of them as a bunch of gypsy singers; now they are teaching the world a lesson in courage." But then he hurries on to concentrate on a group of international travelers stranded in Hungary when the Russians take over. Trying to get to Vienna by bus, they are stopped by a Russian roadblock for border town, and there a Soviet major (Yul Brynner) delays them—indefinitely. The Russian has cause for her be suspicious, for among the fourteen travelers are a very ladylike English Lady (Deborah Kerr), whose husband is safe in England, and her lover (Jason Robards, Jr.), a wounded rebel hero who is trying to escape from Hungary. When the others realize that the disguised rebel is endangering their safety and that the English Lady could win them their freedom by yielding herself to the Soviet major, they give their best efforts to persuading her to go to him.

Filmed in Technicolor in Austria, "The Journey" has authentic settings that add to the realism, and producer-director Anatole Litvak has given his film a certain suspense in the scenes built around Robards (whose performance is excellent) and those in which Deborah and Yul finally get together. The cast is good throughout. Yet none of this can save "The Journey" from seeming contrived. The major's role is by far the most interesting, and Brynner plays it with understanding of the man's inner conflict, but neither he nor the script prepare us for the climax. Furthermore, one cannot help feeling during this long journey that the slighted rebellion is the important thing, not the discomforts of these international travelers.

GOING FARTHER BACK in history, "Tonka" also is concerned with a small group and the part they play in a big event. But in Walt Disney's handsome Technicolor production, which is aimed at youthful audiences, the hero is a horse: the lone survivor of the Custer Massacre. We first see him as a wild stallion being captured by a young Sioux (Sal Mineo) who breaks the beautiful animal, trains him and then sets him free when a mean, older Indian claims him. Tonka later becomes the mount of a 7th U.S. Cavalry captain (Philip Carey) who is riding him during General Custer's ill-timed attack. Most of the film is a build-up to the big massacre, and kids, seeing Custer portrayed as a priggish, stubborn Indian-hater, are likely to line up with Sal Mineo and Tonka. Who knows, perhaps this is all to the good; sooner or later the young fry

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probably have to learn that an Indian doesn't have to be dead to be good. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

In distributing honors in my list of Best Ten (Jan. 9, 1959) the name of James Poe was unintentionally omitted as the co-author with Richard Brooks of the script of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof."—P.T.H.

THE STAGE

HAMMERED GOLD AND ENAMELLING

ABOUT THE EVENT of Sir John Gielgud in our theater of Shakespearean intent, one might invoke that tribute offered by Mr. Stark Young to the Barrymore "Hamlet" of almost four decades ago: that it seemed, within the limits of this art, to gather to itself all the splendors of its generation; to simplify and direct whatever one might hope to conquer or to know. Other enterprises out of the Shakespeare canon have compelled in the past—and will again, surely—effects of a more ambitious scope, more variety of color within the palette, a heightened stir and complexity of motif. None however—no production, no actor— may again afford us what is the legacy of this experience, and its ultimate flame: the possible vision, drawing still on Mr. Young, of "a foundation, a continuous outline."

"The Ages of Man" is "only," to be sure, a reading, moving on the trajectory of time—that Elizabethan obsession—through all the loveliness and terror of human value. An air of distinguished caprice is evident in its master plan: the exquisite familiarities which are here, the presences welcome and the odd intermittences—no Antony, so little Macbeth—and nothing, *de rerum natura,* of that grace which is the woman's part. Yet this personal leisure of choice has allowed what may have been the lustrous pearl of price, unexpected: the Sonnets, with their generous rhythm of the heart, quiet, lyricism of nature and intimate human devotion, their tide coming with so full a gentleness between harsh mountains of the mind and passion, touching with repose the alien plains of character and decision and fatality.

To this last perfection of art which Sir John commands, one's response may be only that freest of human attitudes, praise, and the highest of human gifts, grateful love. Its ease and the labor of which that is an echo, its precisions of conveyed reality, this rhythmic grace under pressure, and final character of luminous revelation: by such, one is compelled to remembrance that Wordsworth said the gods approve the depth and not the tumult of the soul. One aspect only of the technical whole would I single out, as notably relevant to our practical theater: this matter of the *intent* of vocal delivery, and its implication in the wider stuffs of art and personality. Sir John has been much praised for the ravishing solicitation he offers the ear, as if this were somehow the gratuity of "nature," and a thing apart. In truth, the actor has a voice of only special glory, without dusky gleam, and resonant with a timbre of steely artifice. He is wholly the other of spontaneous nature, yet by paradox, the profound originality of his technique is rooted in "naturalness," its quality of seeming beyond all contrivance, its freedom from any conscious deployment or vulgar display. He has brought this into being, I should say, by a total elision of egotism or insistence, by laboring only at the *essential* character of the Shakespearean substance to be expressed—by attention, indeed, to that dictum Miss Mary Garden once offered to singers: take care of the dramatic line and the vocal line will take care of itself. For this austerity and non-involvement with "personality," Sir John has arrived at a larger personality so unmistakable, of such stylistic unity and carrying power, that "simply the thing he is shall make him live." Here is the lesson and such are the ironies of art, of man losing his life to find it, or as Cocteau said: the muses offer no welcome to the ambitious novice, but merely open the door, and point silently at the tight-rope.

There was finally to be felt, in this event of "The Ages of Man"—about one, it was, in the care, the hush, the sometime tears and the gaiety which Yeats saw as transfiguring "all that dread"—those constants which minister always to beautiful life in the fields of light: a luster of joy; intellectual elegance and persuasion of soul, and that sense so blessed and so sweet —Shakespeare's word of highest good—of human life known in the shared revelation which is its ultimate flowering. In this, one was led by Sir John, behind whose gentle reticence of mask, one saw the long ardor of commitment, the meditation on Shakespeare's disastrous reality, and the resolution towards that vision in which, as Mr. Stephen Spender has it of Yeats, tragic life is sacrificed "on altars where the pure gold of idea or art . . . is purged of the dross of actual living and becomes transformed, symbolic, artificial life":

> Once out of nature I shall never take
> My bodily form from any natural thing,
> But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
> Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
> To keep a drowsy emperor awake;
> Or set upon a golden bough to sing.

At such moments, the dialect of theater becomes communion and renewal. To such a ritual, "The Ages of Man" persuaded us, and the thirsty delight with which America—mired in its dead farrago of brutal and meretricious feeling—took the invitation, is a legend of all the reconstitutive powers of art and love.

RICHARD HAYES.

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COMMUNICATIONS

"CERTAIN POEMS"

A. P. O., Germany

TO THE EDITORS: I regret that my reaction to "Vision and Words," a review in your December 19 issue, must be late in reaching you. My Commonweal always arrives in Germany several weeks late, but it's always appreciated, even when I react indignantly (as below).

Your critic, whom you describe as a well-known poet himself, dismisses John Edward Hardy for his failure to master the language in *Certain Poems* and sums up the volume's chief faults as illustrated in the final poem, "To The Modern Catholic Poets." Now, I accept The Commonweal's word that the critic is himself a poet, and I accept the critic's word that he has read the volume he criticizes—though I am startled that the inadequacies of a volume can be so very clearly revealed in just one little poem, especially one in which the critic himself does not understand the last lines. I suggest that (judging from his review) he does not understand the first lines, either.

Of course, I am only an ordinary reader. I never heard of Mr. Hardy until your critic wrote his article. Unlike the critic (who is himself a poet) I have no special competence for reading modern poetry. Still, I do read modern poetry—or I try to—and I have opinions. I am even guilty of trying to decide what the poet "means" (to borrow the critic's unhappy phrase). In the case of his analysis of "To The Modern Catholic Poets," I feel that I understand the poem better than the criticism, that if the poem is bad, the criticism is worse. Take the one sentence, "What poets must praise, over and above the world is the splendor and task of language." Is *that* "mastery of language?"

I do not understand the objection to "carpenter's boy," which should be perfectly clear to any reader of the New Testament and which—in a poem addressed to Catholic poets who presumably have some awe of the Holy Name—is surely preferable to "Jesus Christ." The objection to "sorry botched and knocked together thing" is no better: the general "thing" is more accurate than the specific "cross" because Mr. Hardy is talking about the work of two kinds of craftsmen—modern Catholic poets and the "Joiner" of the Cross. Next the critic goes astray on "When scarecrow silence broke to swansong." He undertakes to tell me this "means to describe" (!) "that lovely transition from death to resurrection." Resurrection? Transition there may be, but it is a transition within the joiner—who made a cross to bear a dead thing, but watched a living creature's swansong. I admit the transition, but you don't get "resurrection" from "swansong."

From here on, I may be as far astray as I think your critic was, but this is what I read: the poet suggests that if modern Catholic poets must endure "the day for flight"—which I suppose may be that awful day described in the Gospel for the last Sunday after Pentecost—they will (do) dwell upon the agonized cry ("swansong," "that word") of dying creatures ("all his feather"); or frenzied ("mind wrapped in bloody clouts forever"), they will become like Orestes (who was pursued by Furies) as he in frenzy cried to his dear Pylades, "See, they are here!" and pay homage to their origins in brute animal life ("nearest dog or cow for mother"). Here, still, the Biblical contrast-reference is with us: there is that other dear Pylades (St. John the Beloved Apostle) who took for *his* mother the highest of God's creatures.

The critic poses as understanding the poet's (Hardy's) vision better than the language of that vision: perhaps he suggests that he would understand Mr. Hardy better by *not* reading his poems ("In the finest poems . . . intricacy of statement and an ungainly language . . . sever the vision and spoil the poem." And again, he "wishes the 'poem' were as perfect as the vision".) The critic would do well—at least when he comes from his theory into particular cases—to read the *words* (what's on the printed page) carefully, reread these words if necessary, and use a dictionary occasionally—so much better than speculating how the

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poet's "vision" ran afoul of the words he used. After all, that's what the poet offers us, the words he uses.

JOHN S. MARSH.

"THE EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY"

Chicago, Ill.

TO THE EDITORS: Christopher Dawson's "The Expansion of Christianity" [Jan. 9], falls into the common but regrettable error of calling Christianity an Occidental religion. He indicates a belief that Asia is a foreign field. This is utter nonsense. Christianity is to be an Asiatic religion. Christ and all his Apostles, even excluding Paul, were Asiatics. At Pentecost there was present only one group from Europe; "strangers from Rome." Most of the others were from Eastern lands—Parthia, Media, Mesopotamia—where the bulk of the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel were scattered.

Historically, the growth of the Church toward the sunrise was far more rapid than toward the setting sun. It leaped toward the Orient, and lagged toward the Occident.

Father Bede Griffith, in a recent issue of the Commonweal, tells of his delight in joining in the original form of Christian worship among the Christians of India, where the language of Jesus—Aramaic—is still used in the way the Apostle Thomas taught them to use it. You will remember that in the year 1952, India's Christians celebrated the 1900th anniversary of the coming of Thomas to India. You may not know that the Imperial University of Japan has published a volume showing discoveries made during the Japanese invasion of China, which narrate the vast extent of Christian archbishoprics, bishoprics and monasteries in Asia which owed their allegiance to the Patriarch of Antioch.

By its attempts to enter into the spirit of Indian Christianity, through use of the language and the forms in use there for nearly two milleniums, the Catholic Church is rediscovering its own source. Theologians have gone far awry in building all their teaching on Latin and Greek mentality, ignoring the obvious fact that Semitic mentality is the matrix out of which our religion sprang.

Are there any who are willing to study Aramaic, the language of Jesus, in its devotional form? I can promise them very great enrichment of their understanding of the Mysteries, even of the Faith.

IRWIN ST. JOHN TUCKER,
Editor, *Amen.*

BOOKS

The Development of the Poetic Personality

SELECTED POEMS 1928-1958. By Stanley Kunitz. Atlantic-Little, Brown. $3.75.
MIRRORS AND WINDOWS: POEMS. By Howard Nemerov. University of Chicago Press. $2.75.

By VIVIAN MERCIER

THE PRESENT-DAY critic often feels obliged to treat a poem as if it were a meteorite fallen from outer space. Every good poem, so the current cant runs, is a unique experience, to be considered in isolation not merely from all other poems whatever but even from the personality of the poet who wrote it. This attitude will always be a valuable antidote to the cocktail-party-gossip school of criticism, but —fortunately for the poets—no good critic can hold it for long at a time. To be a good poet, a man must do something more than write a few good poems: readers and critics must feel that these poems, and others not so good, have soared into orbit from a common center—namely, the poetic personality of their author, which may of course be very different from his day-to-day personality.

Stanley Kunitz and Howard Nemerov—the former in his fifties, the latter in his late thirties—have by now written enough to establish their poetic personalities: I say "establish" not "fix," for anybody who knows their work at all well must feel that they are both still growing, still capable of surprising us. Different as they are, their poetry is alike in two respects: first, it manages to be simultaneously traditional and modern; second, it shows great concern with and mastery of technique.

Beyond that, resemblance ceases. No doubt both would be content to trace their lineage from the "metaphysical" school of English poetry founded by John Donne in the seventeenth century. But whereas Kunitz's affinities remain seventeenth-century, Nemerov would be more at home with Pope in the eighteenth century or Wordsworth in the nineteenth.

Kunitz is one of those poets, present in every age and school, who like to insist that they write every poem in their hearts' blood. One of his best poems is entitled "The Hemorrhage," though his poetic self is not in this case the victim:

> Wildly we dreaded him
> And the strong god of his heart
>
> Escaping, crawling down
> Ditches where papers blow,
> Smearing the sills of the town,
> Strangling the hydra-drains
> Coiled under. Stop! We know
> How much a man contains.

It is impossible to read a volume by Kunitz sensitively without learning "how much a man contains." The

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self-laceration in his earlier book, *Passport to the War,* made one almost ready to cry "Stop!"

Well over a third of *Selected Poems* is new, however, and I happily report that many of the new poems give evidence of a poetic personality that is growing both broader and deeper. The tension in the poetry has not slackened, but much of the strain (or straining) has disappeared. Where before there was only wit, now there is humor too, in poems such as "Benediction," "The Thief," and "The Waltzer in the House."

Reading the new poems, I am struck by the number of images drawn from science; I knew Kunitz had a wide knowledge of scientific literature, but I don't recall his making such confident use of this in earlier poems. Here is a passage that will illustrate what I mean, from "The Science of the Night," a poem addressed to a sleeping woman:

> Dreamer, my own lost rib,
> Whose planetary dust is blowing
> Past archipelagoes of myth and light,
> What far Magellans are you mistress of
> To whom you speed the pleasure of your art?
> As through a glass that magnifies my loss
> I see the lines of your spectrum shifting red,
> The universe expanding, thinning out,
> Our worlds flying, oh flying, fast apart.

Donne had the same taste not merely for far-fetched, intellectualized imagery but specifically for imagery drawn from science.

Kunitz's imagery may often be far-fetched, but it is rarely obscure; it reveals rather than shrouds the subjects of the new poems. Like several of the greatest modern poets, Kunitz speaks more directly to us—and more richly, too—as he grows older. If the quantity of his output catches up with its quality, we may yet learn to rank him among the great American poets of this century.

Howard Nemerov has an opposite problem: he seems a little too prolific. I don't think his latest volume, *Mirrors and Windows,* measures up to the last one, *The Salt Garden,* which admittedly set a very high standard of sensitivity, skill, and sophistication. Nemerov is civilized, urbane, witty, humorous, reflective, and didactic; most American poets of today yearn to have the first three of these adjectives applied to them, but would gladly make any critic swallow the other three. I think Nemerov realizes, however, that all six describe a single coherent attitude, one that he revels in.

Some of his work has appeared in the *New Yorker,* and much more would be perfectly at home there—"A Primer of the Daily Round," for example:

> A peels an apple, while B
> kneels to God,
> C telephones to D, who has a hand
> On E's knee, F coughs, G turns up the sod
> For H's grave, I do not understand . . . .

One doesn't have to "care for modern poetry" to like that kind of light verse or the reflective and didactic "Trees," which begins:

> To be a giant and keep quiet about it,
> To stay in one's own place;
> To stand for the constant presence of process
> And always to seem the same;
> To be steady as a rock and always trembling . . . .

Such poems are easy to read, but they can be devilishly hard to write. I fear, though, that the two unhappy attempts at dramatic monologue—"Moses" and "Ahasuerus"—came all too easily. It's odd that Nemerov should fall down here, when he is such a master of the dramatic lyric—"The Dancer's Reply," for example.

I have other complaints, but, when all is said, there are at least twenty poems in this book that I shall read and admire again and again. Among the lighter pieces I recommend "Distraction," several of the nine "Epigrams," "The Fourth of July," and "A Singular Metamorphosis." From a group of poems on the nature of art I would single out "To Lu Chi" and "Painting a Mountain Stream," though the others are good too. We must look elsewhere, however, for the poems which contain what I believe to be the essential Nemerov: poems like "A Day on the Big Branch," "A Old Warplane," "Sandpipers," "The Loon's Cry," which are too long to quote, too subtle to paraphrase. Each begins with a personal experience, concretely—almost naturalistically—rendered; gradually this experience becomes a symbol, whose implications are meditatively explored by a method reminiscent of Wordsworth, Frost, or Yeats. The poetic personality which seemed so reserved, wry—almost evasive—in other poems now reveals itself as full of hidden warmth and light. Nemerov may not wear his heart on his sleeve as Kunitz does (in his poetry, I mean), but—make no mistake—he has one.

The Common Tests

THE SECOND CHANCE. By Almet Jenks. Lippincott. $5.95.

By WILLIAM PFAFF

SECOND CHANCES there surely are in our lives. It would be desperate if there were not. But the chances are not so surely identified; they wear masks. And the second chances in the life of Blaine Winter are better than life is likely to provide: a girl who is a twin to a lost first love; a job that reflects the lost first choice; a second opportunity to prove physical courage. Yet Mr. Jenk's book is not a common novel. It is conceived and written with intelligence and style.

Blaine Winter is a young officer awaiting discharge as the novel begins. He meets the remote and touching Judith Horn, but after an ultimately unhappy affair his courage fails and he abandons her to

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the social barriers that separate them. He considers teaching but enters Wall Street in its exuberant 1920's. He makes the practical (and, Mr. Jenks suggests, the right?) choice in marriage. He makes his best of a quiet life: a novel and frightening taste of poverty in the depression, modest success with a midwestern men's furnishings company, final return to Eastern semi-academic life as the alumni secretary of his prep school. And in the end, war provides the opportunity to redeem the card of honor over which, in World War I, he once had hesitated.

Romance it is. But the book has wisdom and a power to affect, and it deals with the common tests of courage as well as the grand ones.

Ruthless Selection

MRS. BRIDGE. By Evan S. Connell, Jr. Viking. $3.75.

By ROBERT GUTWILLIG

ANYONE who has read Evan Connell's fine collection of short stories, *The Anatomy Lesson and Other Stories,* will not be so much surprised as gratified to learn that his first novel, *Mrs. Bridge,* is a good one. And if what I have to say in these succeeding paragraphs sounds as if my enthusiasm and regard were tempered or if I were hedging my bets, I can only murmur that after reading his stories and novel, I want a great deal more from Mr. Connell than he appears willing to give at this time. This, too, is meant as praise, for it seems to me that Evan Connell could become one of our best writers.

Mrs. Bridge, unfortunately, is not so much a novel as a series of episodes illuminating the lives of this constantly befuddled woman, her abstracted husband, their three children, and their Kansas City friends. There are a hundred and seventeen of these related, interrelated and unrelated little chapters; they stretch across more than fifty years and, in subject matter, embrace a truly stunning variety of actions

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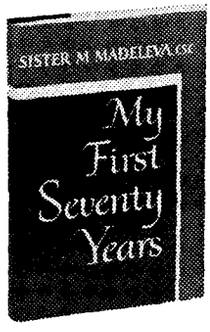

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and emotions between birth and death.

I have no idea why Mr. Connell chose to tell his lovely story in such a choppy manner. Perhaps he wanted to match his style and content together as closely as possible. Perhaps the book started as a short story or several stories. In any event, I think he made a mistake.

The Bridges are as vivid a family as I have encountered in modern fiction, and as individuals they are scarcely less immediate. But they are terribly, deliberately and predictably limited—for two reasons. First, we have met the Bridges many, many times before, both in life and in literature. They are what we like to consider "ordinary people leading ordinary lives." Mr. Connell does not want to make the ordinary extraordinary; he does not want to surprise and appall us; he merely wants to make the ordinary interesting and entertaining. He succeeds, but it isn't quite enough. Second, his method admits no irrelevancies or discrepancies, no real narrative or plot. It permits only the most ruthless selection.

I once heard Frank O'Connor say that the first job of a real writer was to select, and if he was not ruthless in his selection, then he was not a real writer. Maybe so. But Mr. Connell knows so much more than he is willing to tell that he has failed us by remaining partially silent. This failure manifests itself in at least two ways. *Mrs. Bridge* ends rather badly; the characters and the book disperse, the protagonist is left physically and emotionally trapped in her car, and . . . and that is all. Again the ruthless selection. Also, one is constantly aware while reading the novel that the author feels pity for his characters, and consequently that was the only emotion this reader was able to summon up for them. Pity obviously implies a measure of condescension and superiority, and I hope that in his next novel Mr. Connell will write up to his characters and not down to them.

But whether Evan Connell writes up, down or sideways he is a joy to read, for he employs a prose style that is his own and yet not grotesque in its singularity nor dense in its idiosyncrasies. It is clear, it is clean, and it communicates. Finally, Mr. Connell is able to do easily—so easily—the one thing that it has always seemed to me hardest and most important for a novelist to do. He can make his characters change. They are always motivated, but they are always becoming—becoming something different, something else, something more. *Mrs. Bridge* deserves more attention and more readers than I fear it is going to get.

Appeal of the Past

THE ANGRY SCAR. By Hodding Carter. Doubleday. $5.95.

By JOHN COURNOS

AS LATE as 1884, nineteen years after the conclusion of the internecine war between North and South, Jefferson Davis, speaking before "the cheering, weeping members" of the Mississippi legislature, gave utterance to the following:

"It has been said that I should have applied to the United States for a pardon, but repentance must precede the right of pardon and I have not repented. Remembering as I must all which has been lost, disappointed hopes and crushed aspirations, yet I deliberately say, if it were to do all over again I would again do just as I did in 1861."

Mr. Carter, who has written a remarkable book, a painstakingly thorough and honest history of the Civil War aftermath—a book, too, whose exemplary detachment permits the author to mete out praise and blame to both sides without rancor—holds that the Civil War is still being fought out in the heart of an unrepentant South whose latent hostility has been lately fanned into flame by the anti-segregation decision of the Supreme Court. Mr. Carter deals with basic matters. And, basically, the protagonists, white and black, are irreconcilable; at least, they are in the South. Indeed, this aspect greatly troubled Lincoln, who was most disposed to deal charitably with the "rebels."

Unhappily, Lincoln died at the hand of a Southerner, a fact which only intensified the vindictiveness of such Radicals as Thaddeus Stevens who, if he had had his way, would have had Congress expropriate slavocracy's immense acreage for distribution among the freedmen, so that "almost every freed Negro could have stepped directly from slavery to land ownership, though for how long and at what cost in blood cannot be surmised."

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Perhaps animosity was inherent in the situation, but there is little doubt that the chaos which ensued with the disruption of Southern economy, what with Radicals, Carpetbaggers, Scalawags, etc., increased to combustible dimensions impossible to control. There were sanguinary battles between the whites and the blacks. Both sides indulged in murder, arson and rapine. To this day the memory of the period of Reconstruction still rankles in the hearts of many whites, though it is no less certain that many Southerners did not hold in the past, nor hold in the present, that slavery is an institution in consonance with the dignity of men. Nor did all Southerners, even during that troublous period, hate the Northerner.

The story of the impeachment of President Johnson by the Radicals, for no reason other than that he tried courageously to follow out the charitable policy of Lincoln with respect to the South, is impressively handled. It is a picture of American politics at their worst. And little wonder that Mr. Carter frankly calls the attempt an effort at a "political lynching."

In the final paragraph of his very long book Mr. Carter asks the question: "How long will the memory of the Reconstruction period affect the South and the Nation?" His answer is far from propitious: "Today a more determined Negro is again faced by a nearly unified white South no less determined than in 1868 to circumvent the intent of the Federal government. Today the singing of 'Dixie,' the waving of a Confederate flag, and the stump orator's passionate appeal to the past are as sure fire as in the 1870's. . . . And the end is not in sight."

REVIEWERS

Vivian Mercier is a member of the faculty of City College, New York.

William Pfaff is a former associate editor of The Commonweal.

Robert Gutwillig, author of the novel *After Long Silence*, is on the staff of a large New York publishing house.

John Cournos is a well-known anthologist and expert on Americana.

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Dirigée par des Professeurs de Théologie de la Compagnie de Jésus à Louvain

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